DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 841 EC 303 714

AUTHOR Parham, Patricia; McMahon, Patricia
TITLE Infusing Family-Centered Practices into Agency Administration. Project Ta-kos.
INSTITUTION Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc. Albuquerque, NM.
SPONS AGENCY Special Education Programs (ED/OSERS), Washington, DC. Early Education Program for Children with Disabilities.
PUB DATE 94
CONTRACT H024D10039
NOTE 37p.; For related documents, see EC 303 710-715.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Agency Cooperation; Early Childhood Education; *Family Involvement; Governance; *Human Services; Institutional Advancement; Personnel Management; *Program Administration; *Program Content; Program Development; Program Evaluation; *Self Evaluation (Groups); *Special Needs Students; Staff Development; Young Children

ABSTRACT

This self-study manual for program administrators serving young special needs children and their families gives an overview of agency administration from the perspective of a family-centered approach. The areas of agency administration include: (1) family-centered philosophy and sound management practices; (2) governance; (3) mission; (4) development; (5) operations; (6) policy and personnel; (7) job descriptions and staff development; (8) program evaluation; and (9) community relationships. The manual contains self-evaluation forms for assessing how holistic the program's management practices are, where families fit in the program's governance structure, how the mission statement reflects family-centered principles, how development activities support the agency's philosophy, how agency operations demonstrate family-centered principles, how personnel policies are family-centered, how staff are identified and supported, where data are obtained on how well the program works for families, and what the program's community relationships are. (JDD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

ED 379 841

INFUSING FAMILY-CENTERED PRACTICES INTO AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

Written by
Patricia Parham, Ph.D.
and
Patricia McMahon

PROJECT TA-KÓS
Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 7040
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87194-7040

EC 303714

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INFUSING FAMILY-CENTERED PRACTICES INTO AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

Written by
Patricia Parham, Ph.D.
and
Patricia McMahon

Edited by
Tony Husted,
Margaríta Luera
and
Mary Render

PROJECT TA-KÓS
Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 7040
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87194-7040

This document was produced under Grant No. H024D10039 from Early Education Programs for Children With Disabilities, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, U.S. Department of Education. The opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by that department should be inferred.

©1994 Reprint permission must be obtained from
Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 7040, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87194-7040
Phone: (505) 842-9948, FAX (505) 842-9986

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors appreciate the ideas, assistance and support they received from the staff of Project Ta-kós.

We are indebted to Barbara Chase and the entire staff of Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Inc. for their professionalism and support.

We would like to acknowledge the advice and editorial contributions made by the members of our advisory committee. The following members guided us throughout our three year project period:

Raechel Thompson
Carol Westby
Mary Dudley
Molly Grady
Javier Aceves
Gail Beam
Judy Miller
Linda Coleman
Olivia Rivera
Grace Hutzel
Diane Turner
Holly Harrison
Magi Gerety
Victor Proo
Clark Hansbarger
Polly Arango

Our greatest debt is to the administrators who opened their doors to us, gave of their time, juggled their schedules and gave us a critique vital to making this a relevant working document:

Jose Rodriguez
Magie Gerety
Mary Render
Larry Alflen

Special thanks to Nancy Hunt for her skill in preparing this document.

INFUSING FAMILY-CENTERED CONCEPTS INTO AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATOR'S MANUAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction
How To Use This Manual 1

Family-Centered Philosophy and
Sound Management Practices 2

Governance 5

Mission 8

Development 11

Operations 14

Policy and Personnel 17

Job Descriptions and Staff Development 20

Program Evaluation 23

Community Relationships 26

Glossary 29

References 30

Resources 31

INTRODUCTION

The premise of this manual is that as program administrators, as well as service providers, we must practice what we preach! The best way to encourage the use of these principles by staff is to model them with staff. If family-centered principles are the best way to work with consumers, how far will they go towards improving our working relationships with each other?

Think about it. What do these ideas mean when applied to the administration of an agency? If we use family-centered principles with families and program participants, then how can we use them with each other within agencies?

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

The manual gives a brief overview of seven areas of agency administration, from the perspective of a family-centered approach. Each section contains:

1. A one-page description of the area under consideration
2.. Examples
3. Questions that you might ask about the ways this issue is addressed in your agency

From the description and the example, you will understand the direction of the more "family-centered" approach.

There are no "right" answers to the questions posed and no attempt is made to provide these. For example, what percentage of your Board members must be consumers for the family-centered philosophy to be represented? Would one-tenth, one-third, one-half, or two-thirds satisfy the requirement? Your agency must answer this question. It relates to where you currently stand in your understanding and commitment to the dynamic process of a family-centered approach.

This is a self-study manual.

In this way, the manual begins to explore with you what family-centered "means" to the administration of agencies. Administrators, teachers, therapists, Board members, program participants, etc., may all benefit from this manual, as change may begin with any person in an agency. It is geared, however, toward policy-level decision-makers, through whom changes may most quickly be made.

FAMILY-CENTERED PHILOSOPHY AND SOUND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The family is a holistic unit capable of defining it's own priorities. One encourages and supports family members' contributions to the development of solutions, even deferring to the family when "professional judgement" would prescribe a different course of action. Focus on family priorities as they define them. Design services to revolve around the child and family.

Sound management practices possess similar philosophical underpinnings. Effective organizations pursue a single mission with which employees agree. Their "buy-in," secured on the basis of input and participation, is real. The organization's culture pervades the entire system, rather than having divisions operate as separate "kingdoms" and "queendoms." Everyone "owns" the long-range goals and short range plans of the agency and feels a personal commitment to achieving these, contributing as appropriate to their particular position. Why? Staff have defined their objectives and strategies, as well as having provided input into the mission and organizational goals.

In both instances, people believe in the self-motivation of individuals. McGregor's (1960) treatise on the inherent nature of man as viewing work as natural and exercising self-direction and control if committed to objectives, (Theory Y as opposed to Theory X in which man dislikes work and must be coerced into doing it), laid the foundation for these philosophies.

Participation and ownership pervade family-centered philosophy and sound practices of management. Some of the criteria are different. Family-centered practices are measured against family satisfaction and meeting desired outcomes. Sound management practices are measured by employee satisfaction and acheivement of corporate goals. Both define indicators of success against which performance is measured.

Family-centered practices define collaboration as the linking mechanism through which the philosophy is pursued. Such mechanisms exist for agencies as well (Weisbord, 1976).

The issue is operating as a total agency with a single mission, philosophy, etc., as programs serve discrete needs and operate separately. For example, the Early Childhood program within a full-service agency might operate with an Advisory Committee which includes several members from the agency's Board of Directors. The same might be true of Respite, Adult Services, Supported Employment, etc. Or, they might all operate under the Board of Directors, with sub-committees providing advice and direction for specific program components. Their actions are complementary and in accord with the agency's policies.

STATEMENT OF BELIEF

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Las Cumbres Learning Services, Inc. will conduct it's business in such a manner as:

- to promote acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities in the community.
- to advocate with people with disabilities
- to promote change for people with disabilities
- to develop and promote the vision of Las Cumbres
- to respect the cultural diversity of our community
- to commit to provision of competent quality services
- to maintain a professional, supportive work environment for staff, Board and persons served

Illustrates total agency with a single mission and philosophy serving discrete needs and operating separately

HOW HOLISTIC ARE YOUR MANAGEMENT PRACTICES?

1. Does your agency have a system of advisory committees, board of directors, etc.?

   If yes, how is information shared among them/how do they interact?

   How does your agency ensure that all operate under the same philosophy or set of guiding principles?

2. How do the divisions, departments, or programs within your agency communicate with one another?

   How do they coordinate services, events, and plans?

   How are resources shared, e.g., training, equipment, direct services?

3. Who was involved in the development of your agency's mission statement? (Board members, administrators, managers, staff, program participants, community)

   What process was used to determine who would be involved?

4. How many people in your agency could tell a stranger the mission of the agency?

GOVERNING BOARD

Governing bodies are often called Board of Directors, Advisory Board, Board of Trustees, or some other title including the word "Board." These individuals provide guidance and direction for an organization.

The primary functions of a board are:

POLICY FORMATION Tasks include writing and modifying an agency's by-laws and constitution and all actions included in long-range planning and defining agency personnel and operations policies.

OVERSIGHT OF AGENCY OPERATIONS Major responsibilities are: setting standards of quality, monitoring operations, and evaluating agency activities against pre-determined goals.

FUNDRAISING Activities range from writing proposals and sponsoring fund raising events, such as auctions, dances, etc., to developing corporate giving programs and setting up endowments.

Sometimes this work is done by staff in support of the board.

Boards are of two major types – working boards and advisory boards. The important distinction is that an advisory board has no governance authority.

Advisory boards give advice, lend their names to a program as support, and give and receive information important to the agency, e.g., trends in the field, the reputation of the agency, opportunities to compete for and receive resources of various kinds.

Working boards help to raise money, develop policy, and oversee the administration of the agency. They also perform all of the functions of advisory boards.

Whether governance is primarily a board or a staff function, evidence of a family-centered orientation may still be found in their work. It is a "family-first" philosophy.

MOTION: The board accepts the implementation of the following policy concerning parent partnerships:

"Recognizing that parents and professionals working in partnership with each other have significant information and expertise that will benefit the development and quality of life of children and adults with developmental disabilities, and recognizing that choices are constantly made about allocation of resouces, The Board of Directors of Alta Mira adopts, as policy, a system to be in place within the agency that fosters this partnership. Minimally this partnership will be in evidence regarding specific agency services and parent/family satisfaction. Additionally, committees with strong parent representation will regularly review program design, implementation and evaluation. These comittees will make recommendations to administrative staff, and a record will be kept of follow-up action taken by administration. This will assure that parent in-put will be utilized on a regular basis and to a greater degree of detail than that afforded by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will give serious consideration to any recommendations and comments originating from these committees. Planning for services, changes and expansion will reflect parents' perspectives through the committee system."

Board Motion - April 4, 1988

Organizational Chart

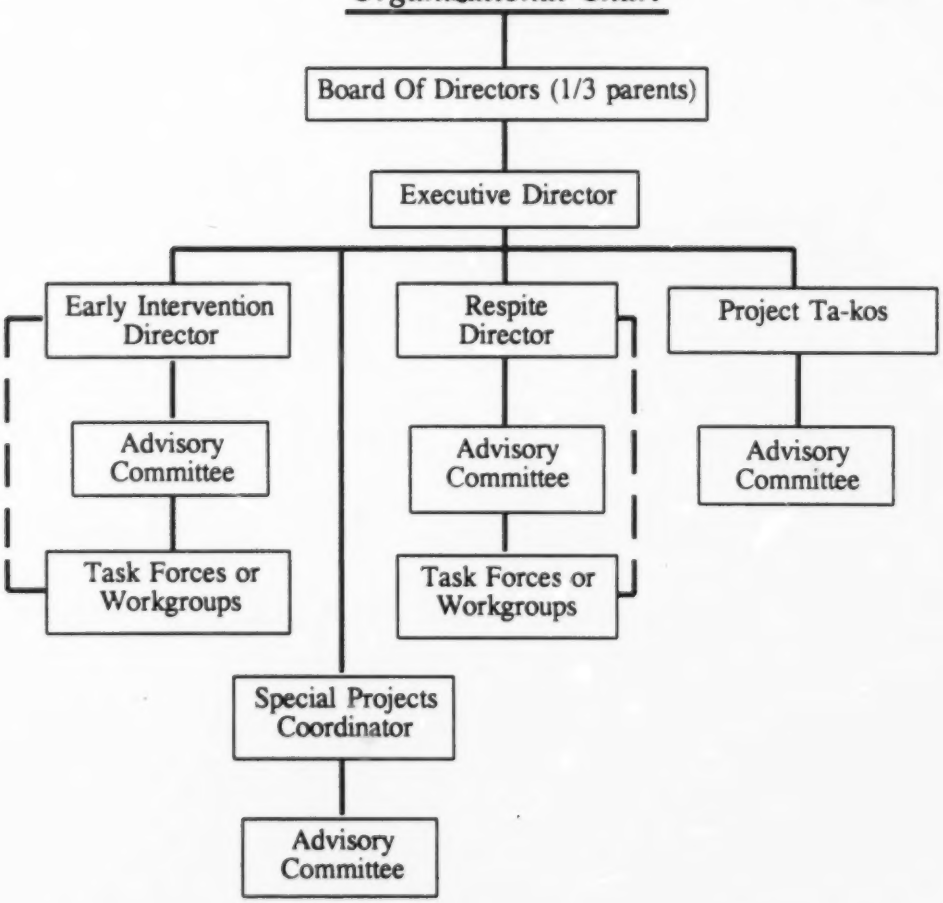


ILLUSTRATION OF:

1. Board support of family-centered philosophy;
2. Family involvement on Board;
3. Use of Advisory Committees

WHERE DO FAMILIES FIT IN YOUR GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE?

1. What percentage of your governing board membership is parents?

   Are parents full voting board members?

2. What input do families have in selecting board members?

3. Which of your agency policies address family rights and participation?

   When and how do families get this information?

4. How does the board support partnerships in the community?

   with families?

   with other agencies?

5. How does the board hear from the program participants?

   Written satisfaction data?

   Reactions to proposed policy?

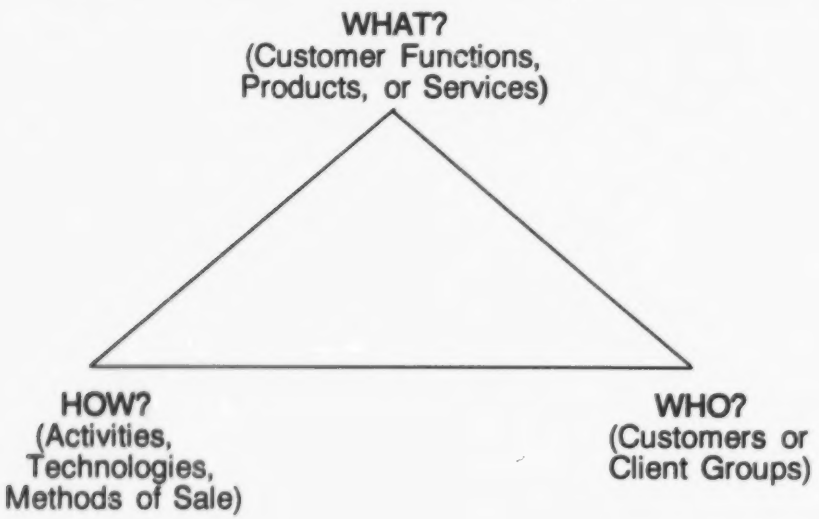
   Testimonials?

   Does this happen on a scheduled basis?

6. Are your board policies agency-driven or family-centered?

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement tells exactly what business an organization is in. Mission statements answer at least three questions.



1. What function does the organization serve?

2. For whom does the organization serve this function?

3. How does the organization go about filling this function?[1]

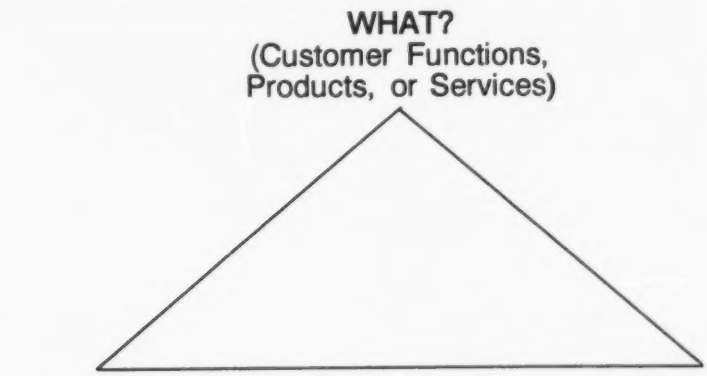
Mission statements may be as short as a paragraph or as long as a page. It is often recommended that a phrase be taken out of the mission statement around which staff can rally. Slogans and buzz words can be used to motivate and keep the major purpose of the organization uppermost in the minds of staff.

Mission statements are dynamic! Re-evaluate and update them periodically, at least as often as you update the agency's strategic or long-range plan.

[1] Pfeiffer, et.al., 1989, pp. 67-68

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement tells exactly what business an organization is in. Mission statements answer at least three questions.



1. What function does the organization serve?

2. For whom does the organization serve this function?

3. How does the organization go about filling this function?

Mission statements may be as short as a paragraph or as long as a page. It is often recommended that a phrase be taken out of the mission statement around which staff can rally. Slogans and buzz words can be used to motivate and keep the major purpose of the organization uppermost in the minds of staff.

Mission statements are dynamic! Re-evaluate and update them periodically, at least as often as you update the agency's strategic or long-range plan.

Shaping Strategic Planning: Frogs, Dragons, Bees, and Turkey Trails by J. W. Pfeiffer, L.D. Goodstein, & T.M. Nolan. Copyright ©1989 by Pfeiffer & Company, San Diego, CA. Used with permission.

HOW DOES YOUR MISSION STATEMENT REFLECT FAMILY-CENTERED PRINCIPLES?

1. Is the mission written using "people first" language?

2. What part of your mission statement:

   describes partnerships with families?

   includes partnerships with other agencies and professionals?

3. How is the family included in the definition of who you serve in your present mission or goal statement?

4. How are staff, families, board members, volunteers, etc. oriented to the mission of the agency?

DEVELOPMENT

Development encompasses fund raising and relationships with funding and licensing and regulatory agencies. Consumer-driven agencies strive for flexible funding and regulations permitting the provision of services desired by program participants, in accordance with program purposes and philosophy. When families are the consumers this then becomes a family-centered approach.

FOCUS ON INFLUENCING:

RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Involve program participants in decision making.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Support the view of accountability to families first, reflecting what is of value to them, and what is important to the funding/regulatory source. Your program participant satisfaction surveys and evaluations come in handy here.

IDENTIFYING AND SECURING FLEXIBLE FUNDS

Write proposals to support needs and preferences of families. This could involve applying to non-traditional funding sources.

Targeting funds for specific services relates to priorities and negotiations. Occasionally, state and federal regulations conflict with the philosophy of an agency. This is a wonderful opportunity to work with parent advocacy groups – sharing resources, coordinating events, etc. – while retaining a strong voice as a provider of services.

Requirements of licensing agencies may also conflict with a program's philosophy. For example, CARF required a formal family assessment. One agency believed this requirement was intrusive since family sharing was optional. This agency demonstrated consistant adherence to this philosophy and was not cited by CARF.

Families may request services which are outside the scope or amount of traditional support. Resources must then be sought from other sources. For example, families at one agency asked for a sibling support group. This popular program receives funding from a variety of sources, ranging from private sector and foundation grants to individual donations and fees.

SAMPLE OF FUNDING SOURCES

~State contracts (Fees negotiable for approved services)	54%
~Medicaid (entitlement - agency does not determine who is eligible, what services are eligible at the reimbursement rates)	19%
~Federal grants (not available for direct services but help with general administrative support)	10%
Contracts (Miscellaneous: often enable services to be provided that otherwise are not available)	3%
United Way	7%
* Fees for services	3%
* Fundraising/donations	3%
* Sales, investments, misc	1%
TOTAL	100%

~ Minimum Flexibility

Moderate Flexibility

* Maximum Flexibility

Illustrates the percentage of funds received by source and the flexibility of funds from each source

DO YOUR ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT YOUR AGENCY'S PHILOSOPHY?

1. What services are program participants requesting that you cannot provide? (Focus on requests that are compatible with the philosophy and mission of your agency.)

   Is the issue:

   resource availability?

   related to qualified staff?

   conflicting regulations?

2. How do your funding sources, (e.g., government, private sector, non-profit organizations and foundations, fundraising, fees) provide flexibility to respond to family-centered services.

3. How much flexibility does your agency have in moving monies around to meet identified needs?

   How is such movement supported in your strategic plan?

4. What is your agency doing to influence regulations that conflict with your philosophy?

OPERATIONS

Agency management and operations undergo a transition to become family-centered (rather than maintaining traditional bureaucratic structures). It is similar to the transition affecting private industry as they focus on total quality management. Let's explore some concepts and how they affect day-to-day operations:

INCLUSION

Operating with a family-centered philosophy is essentially a philosophy of inclusion. An outgrowth of management literature on empowerment and MacGregor's Theory Y assumptions about motivation, inclusion is based on the premises that persons are self-motivated and self-directed. They are capable of integrating personal goals with those of the organization and, they desire to do so. In addition, inclusion means that persons affected by a decision have input into the decision making process.

COMPETENCY-ENHANCING

Staff are met where they are in terms of their skills. Staff development plans map out professional development goals and targets. Management, too, exercises the versatility to provide the task and relationship behaviors appropriate to the readiness (skills and motivations) of individuals.

IFSPs/IEPs/ISPs

A strategic plan guides agency operations. The goals of the agency flow from the mission statement. Departments, or programs, then develop specific objectives and strategies to meet certain goals. Individual goals tie into those of the program and are the basis of the performance review and staff development plan.

EVALUATION

Just as progress of persons is assessed, so too is the progress of the agency and the individuals within it. This is related to management by objectives for the organization and individuals within it. Communicate standards of quality and check to see how well they are met.

These beliefs lead to matrix (flat) organizational structures and to the development of self-led teams, i.e., those with interdisciplinary expertise possessing the power and authority to make decisions. Sometimes these include individuals from different agencies. All fit into the movement toward total quality management.

LAS CUMBRES LEARNING SERVICES, INC.

"TO ASSIST PEOPLE TO ACCESS AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION WITHIN THE COMMUNITY"

Las Cumbres reaches the peak of potential for the community in the year of 1995. Las Cumbres is at the cutting edge of advocacy for human rights by being sensitive to the rights of all persons. Las Cumbres is connected to local, state-wide, and national networks for support. Communities served are fully aware of Las Cumbres' work and actively assist in providing opportunities to consumers to participate in all aspects of community life. Las Cumbres is able to respond to personal, family, and community needs in an immediate, appropriate, and creative manner. Having the resources available, Las Cumbres is able to be a model training program for agencies, colleges and universities. Las Cumbres is a major employer and developer of jobs in our community. Consumers are actively involved in all aspects of Las Cumbres' corporate life.

Illustrates the major outcomes for the agency, an inclusive approach, and the expectations of quality.

HOW DO AGENCY OPERATIONS DEMONSTRATE FAMILY-CENTERED PRINCIPLES?

1. When do staff create staff development plans?

   How are these related to the performance review process?

2. How do annual program goals and objectives tie into the goals and objectives in the strategic plan for your agency?

   How do staff professional development goals relate to program goals?

3. How does your agency coordinate services across programs?

   Do your employees feel loyalty to the agency or to the specific program in which they work?

4. How is team work rewarded in your agency?

5. What mechanisms exist to ensure that standards of quality are set and met in your agency?

   What levels of quality are acceptable? and not?

6. How well is your agency meeting the goals specified in the strategic plan?

PERSONNEL POLICIES

Being family-centered influences the way that work is structured. "People first" philosophy values the individual and the partnership approach. Within agencies, this evolves into an appreciation for the synergistic effect of working in teams. Family-centered agencies create opportunities for individuals to make contributions and participate in decision making.

Personnel administration is impacted by a family-centered philosophy.

HIRING PRACTICES

Hiring provides the agency an opportunity to add a member to the team who shares the family-centered philosophy, a person who is committed to parent-professional partnerships, and one who uses people first language. Families and staff members participate in the hiring process and staff orientation.

SCHEDULING AND BENEFITS

Family-centered means being sensitive to constraints and needs of employees. Flex-time, job sharing, working hours and benefit packages that may be tailored to individual needs are examples of designing procedures that are family-centered.

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Annual performance reviews in which a supervisor rates her subordinates are carry-overs from a "paternalistic, man is motivated by external rewards" philosophy of management. Family-centered managers know that self-motivation is key to excellent performance. Self evaluation, peer evaluation, team evaluation, and supervisor evaluation may be parts of performance reviews. Goals are developed for the next review period. These are negotiated with the supervisor. Performance reviews are signed by all involved parties. More than that, the working relationship is characterized by an openness, sharing and constant give and take so that everyone knows where they stand at all times. Checkpoints are built into the annual schedule so that the review is a culmination of a number of interactions.

A family-centered philosophy influences large and small aspects of the work environment. It is the attitude that makes every individual an important member of the organization.

L. Employee Development

1. Alta Mira is committed to a standard of professionalism that depends upon continued education and updating of skills. Employees are encouraged to attend accredited educational institutions for participation in
   - seminars
   - workshops and
   - classes, which are relevant to the job description.

   Attendance at applicable conferences is also encouraged. Employee should get prior written approval from the Program Director before attending such conferences. Management Team members must have approval of the Executive Director. If an employee wishes to be reimbursed for payment for the conferences, the employee must receive written approval from the Program Director prior to attending the conference.

   Employees attending conferences, seminars, workshops, in-services and classes paid for by Alta Mira, are required to present a brief report on the contents.

Illustrates policy which encourages and supports employees' continuing education.

HOW ARE YOUR PERSONNEL POLICIES FAMILY-CENTERED?

1. What is your agency's philosophy regarding the performance review process?

   What are the procedures for appeal and when are they made known to staff?

2. Is the performance review process reflected in staff development plans?

3. How much flexibility in working hours does your business warrant?

   Is the flexibility available for staff congruent with your business needs?

4. How do the options in your benefits plan allow coverage to be tailored to the age, family situation, and health of employees?

5. In what other ways can your agency be more responsive to individual desires?

6. How are individuals (staff and volunteers) recognized for their contribution to the agency's mission?

7. How do advertisements for positions express the importance of family/professional collaboration?

   How are program participants involved in the review process?

8. In orienting new employees and volunteers, how is the family-centered philosophy put into practice?

9. Which agency policies demonstrate the importance of family/professional collaboration?

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

A family-centered or person-centered philosophy affects every aspect of agency operations. If we value parental and program participant input in decision making, then that value should be reflected in hiring practices. This does not suggest that new or token jobs be created for program participants and family members. It simply suggests that, for existing positions, some effort be made to fill them with program participants and family members. This may require some creative marketing, but the rewards are well worth the effort in program credibility and added benefit to program participants.

In screening potential employees, ask about their understanding and commitment to a family-centered philosophy. Family members may hold these values and practice the philosophy however, they may not be familiar with the term "family-centered". See how their values match those espoused by the agency. The compatibility of values may mean the difference between a happy and productive employee and one who feels isolated, counter-productive and not quite a part of the team.

Staff input is key to developing equitable and motivational positions and employee appraisal processes. It is very much a Theory Y (McGregor, 1960) orientation which relies heavily on self-control and self-direction.

Self-reliance and self motivation are enhanced by a process which allows the employee to develop her own objectives, which she later assesses. The supervisor provides guidance and input into this process. The process is ongoing and in sync with the employee's specified goals and objectives, and is not limited to mandatory six and twelve month reviews. The process is very much self-directed and in keeping with a family-centered orientation.

A family-centered agency is committed to developing employees' career paths, and skills and experiences needed to advance are clear, well defined, and known to interested personnel. The opportunity to advance is available to all qualified staff.

D. Candidate Qualifications

Policy - Each candidate shall meet the minimum qualifications (unless the Executive Director has waived them for an internal candidate), legal requirements/licensure if applicable, and have the ability to perform the essential functions of the job as outlined in the job description. **Additionally, all employees and candidates shall demonstrate a commitment to Alta Mira's "Mission Statement"** [See page 1] **and its philosophy of:**

- a strong family involvement;
- respect for the rights of individual(s) served and families;
- a developmental approach;
- a consultative style of service delivery.

Occupational or Physical Therapist (Licensed). Work w/transdisciplinary staff serving young children with disabilities and their families, in a family-centered program doing consultations and direct therapy, in group, center and home settings. 209 days/yr., 32.5 hrs/week/benefits. Submit resumes.

R.N. needed to work with 0-3 yr. olds with special needs and their families, in family-centered transdisciplinary program. 209 days/year, 32.5 hrs/week/benefits. Requirements: R.N. with pediatric and community experience and reliable transportation. Submit resumes.

Illustrates the desire for a shared commitment to philosophy and approach.

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY AND SUPPORT STAFF?

1. How is your interest in hiring program participants evident in job descriptions, advertisements and promotional materials?

2. When one reads agency materials, how is the commitment to a family-centered philosophy described and clarified?

3. What questions do you ask of potential employees to explore a shared philosophy towards work?

4. Describe your employee review system.

   Who completes the documentation?

   Who develops objectives and goals?

   Who signs the report?

5. When job descriptions are revised, who is involved in defining the requirements and specifications?

6. Where are the requirements and qualifications for advancement defined?

PROGRAM EVALUATION

Evaluation of programs occurs on many levels and may be required by regulatory and funding agencies. Soliciting satisfaction data from families, keeps agencies in touch with the needs and experiences of those whom they exist to serve. This data is qualitative, e.g., often subjective and changes with the family's experience.

Your more objective data, i.e., number of families served, types of interventions for specific concerns, etc., allows you to know whether or not you are being responsive. It is the qualitative data that tells you how well the services you are providing matches the family's needs and expectations. Are you addressing the outcomes which have been identified as most important?

When you evaluate any program, it is best to get data from at least three sources:

BEHAVIOR — Observe the activities of families. Do they initiate in your meetings? Do you check the number of appointments that are missed? This gives you a rough, unobtrusive indicator of how families view your work. What family behaviors indicate staff effectiveness?

ARCHIVAL DATA — What kind of data is kept in the files that point to a family-centered orientation. On IFSPs, ISPs and IEPs, are the goals and evaluation criteria written in the language of the family? Analyze data for quantitative information on program operations.

SELF-REPORT — Ask the families how satisfied they are with services. What are the outcomes from the families' perspectives? How do families feel about your evaluation process?

Be creative in defining the data that you want to examine. Find indicators that will reveal your agency's unique characteristics. As you collect data from these sources, it will give you a picture of how families use your services, as well as their satisfaction with them.

Plan your evaluation and collect information routinely. It is most important to use the information to improve your program. It will affect policies, procedures, and practices. Program improvement is the major purpose of evaluating a program, though funding sources and regulatory agencies often provide the impetus to evaluate.

ALTA MIRA SPECIALIZED FAMILY SERVICES, INC.
RESPITE EVALUATION FORM

1. What do you find particularly helpful about the Respite Program?

2. What do you find particularly difficult or frustrating about the Respite Program?

3. What suggestions do you have for the Respite Program?

4. Any additional comments: (any specific services you wish were part of the Respite Program?)

5. Length of time you have used Respite Home Services.

Name/Signature (if you want to sign this)

Date (Please fill in date)

Illustrates an open ended questionnaire that solicits information which is of concern to the user of the services.

WHERE DO YOU GET DATA ON HOW WELL YOUR PROGRAM WORKS FOR FAMILIES?

1. How do you ask families what is important to them?

   What do you do with the data when you get it?

2. For which services do you routinely collect data on family satisfaction?

   How does the data influence your program?

3. How do you know when staff are working exceptionally well?

4. Who reviews the data you collect?

5. How do families and staff who contribute and participate in the analysis of information access reports generated from the information?

COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act strongly encourages interagency cooperation in service provision. Service coordination may shift among agencies and professionals. The lines of authority and responsibility no longer satisfy previously defined roles. In some cases these roles have expanded and, in others, they have contracted.

The mandate to cooperate pushes agencies to go beyond more traditional methods of interacting. Referrals, often routine, form the starting point for inter-agency relationships. As agencies meet, they may begin to share information on programs and events in which other agencies may be interested. Some coordination may then begin. Finally, as cooperating agencies discover mutual needs, they may begin to plan and implement joint programs, maximizing resources, thereby enabling the provision of "more and better" services in the long-term.

Under a family-centered philosophy, the leadership for different events shifts with the expertise and resources required. Leadership may be provided by families, service coordinators or other providers. Agencies begin to acknowledge staff for developing opportunities for collaboration, including those not limited to serving children with special needs. For example, collaborative efforts that make service delivery less cumbersome to families are encouraged.

In the most effective partnerships, cooperating agencies invest time and energy into developing shared expectations. This includes general duties as well as a shared philosophical orientation toward providing services. Procedures for obtaining, sharing and preserving information may be streamlined and some agencies might actually begin to use common forms for the collection of information. Often interagency agreements describe the roles and outline the policies on which programs have agreed. These agreements sometimes start with verbal agreements and can become formal documents. These procedures meet long-term objectives and may be perceived inefficient in the short-run. However, in the long run, the work is accomplished with more cooperation and efficiency and, the family benefits when the agencies ensure that their practices are complementary.

INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT

(Agencies, purpose, and authority sections taken from a nine page document.)

Service Coordination Roles Across Agencies

Between: Albuquerque Public Schools, Alta Mira Specialized Family Services, Children's Medical Services' Family Infant Toddler Program, La Vida Felicidad, Inc., The Medically Fragile Program, The New Mexico Preschool and Infant Evaluation Program (PIE), Parents Reaching Out, Peanut Butter and Jelly Preschool, Southwest Communication Resources' Pueblo Infant Parent Education (PIPE) Project, Statewide Training and Education with Parents through Home Intervention (STEP*HI), Southern Pueblos Agency's Native American Portage Project Replication (NAPPR) Program, Developmental Care Program, Department of Pediatrics, University of New Mexico and Laguna Early Childhood Program.

Effective Date of Agreement: December 15, 1993

I. Purpose of the Agreement

In order to facilitate the accessibility of high quality, family-centered, and coordinated early intervention services to eligible infants, toddlers, and their families in the greater Albuquerque area, the above mentioned agencies have agreed to collaborate in the definition of the roles of service coordinators across agencies. In keeping with the intent of Part H of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Medicaid regulations, this agreement supports parent choice in the matter of selection of the family service coordinator. The agreement is intended to allow programs the flexibility to provide service coordination in ways that make sense to the families they serve. The agreement will ensure the following:

* that parents' ability to be co-service coordinators or to function as their own service coordinators is enhanced,
* that parents will be provided with information about how to access services for their families,
* that continued support and follow up are provided so that the services offered meet the families' needs, and
* that communication among providers is facilitated.

II. Authority to Implement the Agreement

This is intended to be a formal, working agreement, in good faith, among the signatory agencies. Representatives of all agencies have participated in the development of the agreement and have committed to implementing the agreement to the extent possible within their individual programs/agencies.

Illustrates a family-centered philosophy through which leadership for different events shifts with the expertise and resources required including leadership provided by families.

WHAT ARE YOUR COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS?

1. Through interagency agreements, what are the benefits to:

   1) families

   2) my agency

   3) other agencies

2. Inventory community agencies with which you work on a regular basis. Brainstorm ways to improve cooperation and share services -- to program participants, staff, and volunteers.

3. Examine interagency agreements into which your organization has entered. How well do these reflect a family-centered philosophy?

GLOSSARY

FAMILY-CENTERED
Philosophy of providing services requested by the family, in the manner, place, and time of the family's choosing.

PERSON-CENTERED
Philosophy of providing services requested by the person served, in the manner, place, and time of the person's choosing.

IFSP
Individualized Family Service Plan

IEP
Individualized Education Plan

ISP
Individualized Service Plan

CARF
Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities

REFERENCES

Carew, D. & Parisi-Carew, E., (1990). Building high performing teams: participant workbook. Escondido, CA: Blanchard Training and Development, 1990.

Cummings, T. G. & Huse, E. F., (1989). Organization development and change. St. Paul: West Publishing Company.

Dunst, C. J., Johanson, C., Trivette, C. M. & Hamby, D., (1991). "Family-oriented early intervention policies and practices: Family-centered or not?", Exceptional Children.

McGregor, D. M. (1960). "The human side of enterprise". New York: McGraw-Hill.

Pfeiffer, J.W., Goodstein, L.D., and Nolan, T.M., (1989). Shaping strategic planning: frogs, dragons, bees, and turkey tails. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Tregoe, B.B. & Zimmerman, J.W. (1980). Top management strategy: What it is and how to make it work. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Weisbord, M., Wesley, A. (1976). Organizational diagnosis: Six places to look for trouble with or without a theory.

RESOURCES

Brochure:

United Cerebral Palsy Associations, Inc.
Community Services Division
1522 K Street, NW, Suite 1122
Washington, DC 20005
1-800-USA-5UCP

McWilliam, P.J. and Winton, P. (1991). Brass Tacks. Chapel Hill, NC The University of North Carolina